

What is claimed is:

1. An intelligent medical device barrier comprising:
a cover adapted to be received over a medical device; and
sensor means for sensing if said cover has been received on said medical device
5 and is in place properly on said medical device, wherein said medical device is adapted to
be activated after a determination that said cover is in place properly on said medical
device.
2. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 1 wherein said sensor
means provides an identification for said cover and said sensor means is coupled to said
10 cover further comprising:
said intelligence means receiving said identification from said sensor means and
determining from said identification if said cover has not been previously used; and
activating means for activating said medical device, said activating means being
coupled to said medical device, said activation means is adapted to activate said medical
15 device if it is determined said cover has not been previously used.
3. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 1 further comprising a
retaining means for securing said cover to said medical device.
4. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 3 wherein said retaining
means is coupled to said cover and said sensing means is coupled by said retaining means
20 to said cover.
5. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 3 wherein upon said
retaining means being secured to said medical device said sensor means is activated.
6. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 3 wherein said retaining
means is a detent, tab, snap catch, hook or ring.
- 25 7. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 3 wherein said retaining
means is a detent which is coupled to an indentation or protrusion on said medical device.
8. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 3 wherein said retaining
means inserts, snaps or twists into place on said medical device.
9. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 2 wherein said
30 identification is selected from the group consisting of a lot number, serial number and
color.

10. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 1 wherein said sensor means provides an expiration date for said cover and further comprising intelligence means coupled to said sensing means, said intelligence means receiving said expiration date from said sensor means and determining from said expiration date if said cover has
5 not expired; and

activation means coupled to said medical device adapted to activate said medical device, said activation means activating said medical device if it is determined said cover has not expired.

11. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 2 wherein said sensor
10 means further includes calibration data which is forwarded to said intelligence means.

12. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 2 further comprising second sensor means for receiving information upon use of said medical device.

13. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 2 wherein said intelligence means comprises an electronic unit and said identification is forwarded over a link to said
15 election unit.

14. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 13 wherein said link is selected from the group consisting of: a wireless link, optical link and electrical connection.

15. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 2 wherein said sensing
20 means provides said identification by radio frequency (RFID) tag, RFID direct connect, EEPROM, electrical fuse, ink or barcode.

16. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 2 wherein said identification is in the form of an ink, a state of said ink being changed upon exposure to heat, temperature or wavelength of a predetermined intensity and said intelligence means
25 includes an optical interrupter to detect said state of said ink.

17. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 2 wherein said identification is in the form of a barcode and said intelligence means includes a barcode reader for reading said barcode.

18. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 1 wherein said cover
30 includes a pull tab attached to a reduced thickness portion of said cover, said pull tab

being torn wherein said pull tab is used to remove said cover from said medical device, wherein said cover is unable to be re-used.

19. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 1 wherein said sensor means comprises an enable switch coupled to said medical device and said cover includes
5 a collar, said collar contacting said enable switch when said collar is in place.

20. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 19 wherein said collar includes a detail and said medical device includes a ledge, said detail fits into said ledge for snapping said collar in place on said medical device.

21. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 20 wherein said collar
10 further comprises a protrusion for contacting said enable switch.

22. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 1 wherein said collar is formed of a hard plastic material.

23. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 1 wherein said cover is formed of a material selected from the group consisting of: polyurethane, terphalate
15 polyethylene and silicone.

24. The intelligent medical device barrier of claim 1 wherein said medical device is a probe.

25. A method for using a medical device comprising the steps of:
installing a cover over said medical device
20 sensing if said cover has been received on said medical device and is in place properly on said medical device; and
activating said medical device after a determination that said cover is in place properly on said medical device.

26. The method of claim 25 before said activating step further comprising the
25 steps of:

determining if said cover has not been previously used and deactivating said medical device if it is determined said cover has not been previously used.

27. The method of claim 22 wherein said determining step includes providing an identification in said sensing step from a sensor to an intelligence means and
30 determining from said identification if said cover has not been previously used.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein said identification is selected from the group consisting of a lot number, serial number and color.

29. A method for using a medical device comprising the steps of:
installing a cover over said medical device
5 determining if said cover has not been previously used; and
activating said medical device if said cover has not been previously used.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein said determining step includes providing an identification in said sensing step from a sensor to an intelligence means and determining from said identification if said cover has not been previously used.